



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

# Public Health

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December 17, 2010

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *J. Fielding MD*  
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **FINAL REPORT ON THE PROJECT TO ENHANCE AND IMPROVE  
H1N1 OUTREACH TO THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

On December 15, 2009, on a motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) were instructed to develop and implement a plan to improve H1N1 vaccination outreach to African American residents within the County of Los Angeles with the end goal of increasing vaccination rates. The plan was submitted to the Board on December 31, 2009. This is the final report on the efforts undertaken by DPH and its contracted agencies on the plan and includes recommendations for future activities specific to engaging African American residents and reducing disparities in vaccination uptake.

The plan had three main elements. First, to increase community knowledge of the health risks from H1N1 influenza among African Americans. Second, to improve communications and provide factual and consistent messaging about H1N1 through trusted community leaders with a focus on increasing H1N1 vaccination by emphasizing vaccine safety. Third, to expand outreach and engagement activities conducted in African American communities through partnerships with community-based organizations with a history of effective health promotion activities among the target population.

Through a multi-pronged effort which included contracting with clinics and community agencies, DPH carried out the elements of this plan in the spring of 2010. It is important to note that the efforts and activities conducted by DPH and its contracted entities were limited due to: overall decline in public demand for the vaccine across Los Angeles County; reduced rates of illness and media coverage; the brevity of the funding available for the outreach of the project; and embedded cultural beliefs generally held by the target population regarding the safety of vaccines. Nevertheless, DPH and its contracted partner were able to accomplish the following:

- Expanded and robust vaccine availability through local clinics, mobile clinics, and community events and targeted outreach through trusted partners and tailored messages.

- DPH established a network of key partnerships with local and community stakeholders. Many of these entities have expressed an interest in an ongoing commitment to promote influenza vaccination within their communities. For example, a news article published in November 2010 highlighted the ongoing efforts of one of these partners, Immunize LA, to encourage vaccination by promoting a series of flu clinics targeted at minority communities in Gardena and South Los Angeles.
- DPH expanded the reach of public health messages about the importance, value, and safety of vaccination against H1N1 and seasonal flu. Outreach and education, including tailored materials for African Americans was provided to thousands of community members.

### **Media Outreach**

DPH contracted with Clear Channel that subcontracted with Voices, Inc. to conduct targeted media outreach among the African American community. Media messages (including public service announcements) tailored for African Americans about the importance of the H1N1 vaccine were disseminated widely through advertising buys in the following mediums: local newspapers (Los Angeles Sentinel, Our Weekly, The Wave, California Crusader, The Bulletin Group, LA Watts Times, LA Focus on the Word, and Metropolitan News outlets), radio stations (KJLH, KDAY, and HOT), cable television channels (Black Entertainment Television (BET), Lifetime, VH1, and Nickelodeon), and billboards and bus advertisements. Media outreach was also conducted at a variety of settings such as Magic Johnson movie theaters and the Steve Harvey Morning Show. Additionally, DPH partnered with the Urban Beauty Collective to distribute vaccination education materials in hair salons and barbershops.

### **Community Outreach and Training**

In order to expand its reach into the targeted community, DPH established a network of key partnerships with local and community stakeholders to do the following: improve and expand the reach of DPH vaccination messages; embed outreach efforts in the communities; enlist support from trusted agencies currently serving African Americans; and provide H1N1 vaccination in African American communities through permanent clinical settings, or mobile units. Contracted agencies were identified based on their service and connection to the African American community and on their ability to advance the goals of the project and establish a foundation for long-term collaboration to increase preparedness and improve health in Los Angeles County, especially within the target population.

By the end of March 2010, contract agreements were executed with the following community agencies: Immunize LA, INMED, Shields for Families, Community Health Councils, Mission City, and The Children's Collective. These agencies were required to participate in a training conducted by DPH. This training provided an essential overview of H1N1 and seasonal influenza. Participants also received educational materials developed by DPH tailored for the African American community. At the conclusion of the project, agencies noted that this training was crucial in helping their staff develop a clear understanding of the influenza contagion, the benefits and safety of the vaccine, and myths regarding the flu. Accordingly, agencies reported

that this information greatly increased their ability to address similar questions and concerns from the target population. Additionally, the agencies reported that the educational materials were very helpful and requested additional specialized messaging for seniors, children, people with diabetes, and people with asthma.

All contracted agencies were required to report their activities and progress on a monthly basis. The activities included participation in meetings, presentations, health fairs, and other outreach venues. Overall, agencies participated in 100 outreach activities during the project period (Attachment 1). Additionally, agencies were required to report the number of individual contacts made in the community. From February 17 to July 31, 2010, the agencies provided information and/or made referrals for free or low cost providers of H1N1 vaccine to 5,653 individuals.

Contracting with these agencies afforded DPH the opportunity to bolster relationships with these agencies and promote consolidation and coordinating of outreach activities among agencies. It also gave DPH the opportunity to obtain feedback and suggestions from the agencies on how to best improve messaging to address specific concerns and barriers among African Americans regarding the H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccines.

In addition to the work by the contracted partners, DPH personnel conducted more than 200 presentations on H1N1 to increase understanding of H1N1 and promote vaccination. Presenters utilized a toolkit created by DPH tailored to African American families. DPH also created and distributed a series of flyers with a 'Choose to Get Vaccinated' theme.

### **DPH Vaccine Administration**

From October 23, 2009, through May 3, 2010, DPH administered a total of 233,602 doses of H1N1 vaccine through the following venues: large public H1N1 vaccination clinics or Points of Dispensing (PODs), SPA-based vaccine events, and DPH clinics. Of the 233,602 doses, DPH provided approximately 6,965 doses or 3% of its H1N1 vaccine specifically to individuals that self-identified as Black/African American. However, although demographic information was collected at the events, a percentage of the records were found incomplete—without ethnicity information or out-of-county residents.

Overall, DPH held 109 PODs in large venues throughout the county that yielded 181,312 vaccinations. Of those, 4,981 were reported to be Black/African American. Additionally, DPH held 409 SPA-based events that included community level education, promotion, and administration of the H1N1 vaccine. DPH co-hosted these events with a variety of community stakeholders that connect with or serve residents with much more frequency than DPH. These organizations included schools, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, skilled nursing facilities, day care centers, senior centers, community centers, local government, and first responder agencies. The venues ranged from Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) centers to interfaith events to YWCAs. A total of 30,309 doses of vaccine were administered by DPH at these events with a total of 1,415 vaccinations administered to persons identifying themselves as Black/African American. The result was a slightly higher percentage (3.46% vs. 2.75%) of vaccine uptake by African Americans at these events than at the PODs.

In order to increase the availability of vaccine specific to the target population for this project, DPH contracted with three clinics (T.H.E. Clinic, Watts HealthCare Corporation, and South Central Family Health Center) to administer the H1N1 vaccine in their clinics. In addition, DPH contracted with two mobile clinics (St. Francis Hospital and COACH for Kids Cedars-Sinai) to administer vaccine at community events. From March 23 to May 31, 2010, a total of 857 doses were reported administered by the five clinical partners with the mobile clinics participating in 35 events during the project period (Attachment 2). Ninety-five of the 857 doses were identified as being received by Black/African Americans.

As was done at the PODs and SPA-based events, the clinics were instructed to enter the demographic information of each recipient into the California Immunization Registry (CAIR) system. DPH hosted a training for the clinics on how to use the CAIR system to correctly input the demographic data. However, despite these efforts, race/ethnicity data was not consistently reported. Consequently, 414 (48%) of the 857 doses reported did not have race/ethnicity information. It is probable that if more demographic information was entered, the number of doses administered to African American would be higher.

Vaccine outreach was also conducted at schools. From early November 2009 through May 2010, DPH hosted vaccination clinics at 107 schools throughout Los Angeles County for a total of 6,641 vaccinations with 192 or 3% distributed to African Americans. The vaccinations were coordinated by DPH and administered at no cost.

In addition to these efforts, contracted clinics and agencies conducted outreach and administered vaccine at the following elementary and secondary schools: Crenshaw High School, Jordan High School, Normandie Elementary, Lynwood School District, 96<sup>th</sup> Street Elementary, Lindbergh Elementary, 107<sup>th</sup> Street Elementary, and West Athens Elementary School.

### **Recommendations/Lessons Learned**

On June 10, 2010, DPH hosted a closing conference event for all contracted partners (agencies and clinics) and several key DPH staff. The half-day conference consisted of a series of facilitated exercises and discussions about personal and shared experiences, including the barriers to outreach and vaccination. Facilitators also conducted the group in developing recommendations for future efforts related to influenza vaccination and similar outreach and engagement projects.

The group emphasized the need for consistent and timely education and outreach to the targeted population about the importance, value, and safety of the flu vaccine and vaccines in general. The group expressed confidence that such efforts would ultimately increase the motivation of the targeted population to protect self, family, and community thereby increasing vaccination rates and decreasing the spread of disease.

- *Timing:* The lack of timeliness of the project and the limited project period were identified as major issues for all of the project partners and as significant barriers in implementing their scopes of work. All participants recommended that any similar efforts in the future be coordinated and initiated earlier in the flu season.

- *Location:* Most participants felt that some of the locations for the PODs were not optimal sites to effectively reach the target population. Participants suggested that for successful outreach and vaccine distribution DPH needed to utilize sites that are smaller, non-clinical, and based in the community such as shopping malls, job fairs, or WIC centers.
- *Spokespersons:* Participants discussed the advantages and disadvantages of having a spokesperson who has mass appeal versus one who is known locally and respected within the community. While popularity and recognition are key factors in the selection of spokespeople such as athletes and musicians, participants noted that there was a need for spokespeople located in the community and who locally represent community members. According to the participants, this type of community spokesperson is able to convey a greater sense of trust within the community as well as accountability for the wellbeing of those they represent or serve.
- *Media:* Participants recommended that DPH use a range of channels for communication including ethnic newspapers, social networking tools and local radio. Participants reiterated the need for a continuous and proactive response by DPH to purported stories and myths regarding H1N1 and the vaccine. According to participants, when stories about adverse experiences with the vaccine begin to circulate, DPH should respond with an immediate response to counter false reports, provide accurate information, and assuage fears.
- *Partners:* Participants noted the value of partnering with DPH to reach the target community. They requested more consistent and in-depth collaboration with DPH for future events. The participants also suggested additional partnerships with additional agencies who serve the community across the age continuum, including children, families, teens and seniors.

## **2010-11 Flu Season**

Based on the feedback and recommendations from the project and with guidance from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DPH is working to systematically build on the lessons learned from the results of this project. Specifically, DPH is planning to implement several new activities in order to improve outreach to Los Angeles County's African American population.

### *Vaccination and Outreach at Child Care Centers*

Based on the recommendation to improve vaccine rates by conducting outreach and vaccination at non-clinical settings and through expanding partnerships, DPH is conducting a pilot vaccine health literacy initiative with child care resource and referral agencies. This initiative will be tailored to the populations that these agencies mainly serve which are the most vulnerable, Medicaid-eligible, and ethnic minority children and their families.

The initiative will have three components: 1) provision of free on-site seasonal flu vaccinations through five of the largest child care resource and referral agencies that serve the hardest-to-reach target populations; 2) design and implementation of a social marketing program of

culturally appropriate community education and outreach regarding vaccines and children's health; and 3) engagement of the extensive network of the agencies for pandemic preparedness planning and countermeasure distributions.

#### *Increased Vaccination and Outreach in Schools*

DPH is working to improve pandemic preparedness in schools by identifying and addressing gaps in existing plans and strengthening collaboration. Continued outreach to schools is essential in ensuring schools are prepared to do the following: respond to potential increasing flu activity on their campuses; counter fear and anxiety and allay misconceptions and media misrepresentations regarding the effectiveness and safety of vaccinations; improve disease reporting and infection control on campuses; encourage and promote flu vaccination; and support school-based vaccination efforts.

Through contracts with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), DPH will provide oversight and direction to the development of school-based mass vaccination plans. In addition, LAUSD and LACOE will oversee pilot demonstrations and will provide planning, recruiting, coordinating and administrative assistance to facilitate the delivery of vaccine to participating schools.

#### *Increased Media Outreach*

Based on the challenges experienced during the 2009-10 flu season regarding the safety and mistrust of the H1N1 vaccine, DPH has allocated funds to support a public awareness campaign focusing on community mitigation strategies for pandemic flu preparedness and response. This campaign will target those ethnic minority communities who were identified as underutilizing public access to vaccine during the 2009-2010 H1N1 response and/or did not seek vaccine from their private health care providers.

This multi-cultural, multi-lingual education campaign will be in 11 languages. The campaign will include public service announcements in the following formats: radio, online and social media outlets, outdoor media, and community newspapers. Outreach will also occur at community events and in coordination with other County partners, businesses, and community-based organizations. Two of the four contracting agencies will focus their efforts on African American and Hispanic outreach.

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisor

**H1N1 Outreach Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Week of April 5, 2010	H1N1 presentation given to clients in the following SHIELDS Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ARK Program</li> <li>• Eden Program</li> <li>• Revelations Programs</li> <li>• Healthy Start Program</li> <li>• Tamar Village Program</li> <li>• Exodus Program</li> </ul>	SHIELDS for Families
April 15, 2010	Presentation at Mark Ridley-Thomas building, Vermont Ave, LA	SHIELDS for Families
April 22, 2010	Crenshaw High School Health Fair	SHIELDS for Families
April 23, 2010	Jordan High School Health Fair	SHIELDS for Families
April 24, 2010	Victoria's Park Annual Kids Community Health Fair	SHIELDS for Families
May 7, 2010	West Angeles Villa Senior Citizens	SHIELDS for Families
May 8, 2010	Westside Pregnancy Clinic Health Fair	SHIELDS for Families
May 17, 2010	West Angeles Villa Senior Housing	SHIELDS for Families
May 20, 2010	SHARE	SHIELDS for Families
May 21, 2010	SHIELDS for Families Annual Health Fair	SHIELDS for Families
March 27, 2010	Normandie Ave. Elementary	Community Health Councils
March 2010	Women's Ministry Third Annual Faith Based Conference, Mount Tabor Baptist Church	Community Health Councils
March 2010	Nomandie Elementary Community Health and Safety Fair and Family Fun Run/Walk	Community Health Councils
March 2010	USC Community Health Fair	Community Health Councils
April 2010	"A Taste of Health and Fitness" Fair at Rancho Cienga Sports Complex	Community Health Councils
April 2010	Community meeting at Weingart YMCA Wellness and Aquatic Center	Community Health Councils
May 2010	Women's Health Festival,	Community Health

	Watts Health Center	Councils
May 2010	Parent meeting at West Athens Elementary	Community Health Councils
May 2010	2 parent meetings at the Girls Club of Los Angeles	Community Health Councils
May 10, 2010	Boys and Girls Club of the San Fernando Valley with the San Fernando Valley NAACP	Mission City Community Network Inc
May 20, 2010	African American Leadership Summit	Mission City Community Network Inc
May 27, 2010	San Fernando Valley Veterans' Job and Resource Fair	Mission City Community Network Inc
June 16, 2010	Valley Interfaith Council at the Greater Community Missionary Baptist Church	Mission City Community Network Inc
June 6, 2010	Lake View Terrace American Baptist Church	Mission City Community Network Inc
June 17, 2010	The Optimist Club of the San Fernando Valley	Mission City Community Network Inc
June 25, 2010	Prayer breakfast at the Greater Community Center in Pacoima	Mission City Community Network Inc
June 26, 2010	"Picnic in the Park" at the Northridge Recreation Center	Mission City Community Network Inc
June 10, 2010	Black Infant Health's Celebrate Healthy Babies Event	The Children's Collective, Inc.
June 21, 2010	The Children's Collective Social Support and Empowerment Network	The Children's Collective, Inc.
June 4 and 17, 2010	Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza	The Children's Collective, Inc.
June 5, 2010	B.O.W. Health and Arts Festival	The Children's Collective, Inc.
June 19, 2010	Multi-cultural Fiesta and Community Resource Fair (107 <sup>th</sup> Street)	The Children's Collective, Inc.
June 26, 2010	Watt's Men's Health Fair	The Children's Collective, Inc.
May 19, 2010	The Children's Collective Social Support and Parenting Class	The Children's Collective, Inc.
May 8, 2010	Westside Pregnancy Clinic Community Fair	The Children's Collective, Inc.
May 20, 2010	SHARE! Health and Wellness Fair	The Children's Collective, Inc.
March 2, 2010	Compton College	INMED
March 2, 2010	24 Hour Fitness Sports Center	INMED



March 2, 2010	Pink Beauty Supply Store	INMED
March 3, 2010	Pink Beauty Supply Sotre	INMED
March 3, 2010	Three T's Enterprise	INMED
March 3, 2010	Cal State Dominguez Hills	INMED
March 8, 2010	St. Rest Missionary Baptist Church	INMED
March 8, 2010	Century Community Children's Center	INMED
March 8, 2010	Handy's Beauty Supply	INMED
March 8, 2010	LA Auto Insurance	INMED
March 8, 2010	Shields for Families, Genesis	INMED
March 8, 2010	St. John's Well Child and Family Center	INMED
March 9, 2010	Pro-Club Distribution	INMED
March 10, 2010	The Children's Collective	INMED
March 10, 2010	Lindbergh Elementary	INMED
March 11, 2010	Department of Children and Family Services	INMED
March 11, 2010	El Camino College Outreach Department	INMED
March 11, 2010	YWCA, Compton	INMED
March 11, 2010	Children's Institute, Inc.	INMED
March 11, 2010	Victim-Witness Assistance Program	INMED
March 11, 2010	One Stop Recovery Program	INMED
March 11, 2010	Be Well Now Institute, Inc.	INMED
March 11, 2010	Watts Labor Community Action Committee	INMED
March 17, 2010	Immunize LA Families Joint African American Taskforce and Community Outreach meeting	INMED
March 18, 25, May 31, 2010	Compton Nutrition Social Support Group	INMED
March 23, 2010	Lindbergh Elementary	INMED
March 24, 2010	LA Care Round Table Coalition	INMED
March 24, 2010	Immunize LA Senior Health event	INMED
weekly from March 25 to May 6, 2010	Central Farmer's Market	INMED
March 25, 2010	Cal Safe Pregnant Minor Program	INMED
March 25, 2010	9 <sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Empowerment Conference	INMED
March 31, 2010	Watt's Healthcare Center	INMED
March 31, 2010	First Bethany Baptist Church	INMED
March 31, 2010	Watts Art Gallery	INMED

April 6, 2010	Spring Health Fair at Cal State Dominguez Hills	INMED
April 10, 2010	Youth Education and Wellness Fair in Lynwood	INMED
April 12, 2010	Compton College	INMED
April 14, 2010	Cal State Dominguez Hills	INMED
April 14, 2010	Lynwood's Parent Leaders Meeting	INMED
April 16, 2010	Interval House Women's Group	INMED
April 17, 2010	School Readiness Resource Fair	INMED
April 19, 2010	Cal State Dominguez Hills Health Luncheon	INMED
April 19, 2010	Southwest College	INMED
April 19, 2010	Aerospace Corporation	INMED
April 19, 2010	Ability First/Harry A. Mier Center	INMED
April 19, 2010	Los Angeles Urban League	INMED
April 19, 2010	Graceful Senescence	INMED
April 20, 2010	Postpartum Depression Social Support Group	INMED
April 20, 2010	Beyond Shelter	INMED
April 22, 2010	107 <sup>th</sup> Street Elementary School Health Fair	INMED
April 24, 2010	LA African American Task Force and Health Fair	INMED
April 27, 2010	Immunize LA Families Joint African American Taskforce and Community Outreach meeting	INMED
April 29, 2010	Heart of Faith event at FAME Renaissance Center	INMED
May 15, 2010	Watt's Women's Health Festival	INMED
May 26, 2010	CA REACH US Conference	INMED
May 31, 2010	60 <sup>th</sup> Women's International Convention	INMED
May 14, 2010	Faith leaders and Health Care Provider event	INMED

**Mobile Units Vaccination**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Agency</b>
March 6, 2010	Congresswoman Linda Sanchez Census Event	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
March 13, 2010	Abbott Elementary School	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
March 21, 2010	Bethel Reformed Baptist Church Health Fair	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
April 1, 2010	City of Huntington Park Census Event	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
April 11, 2010	St. Alyouis Church	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
April 18, 2010	Our Lady of Victory Church	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
April 21, 2010	Lynwood Unified School District	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
April 29, 2010	Fame Church	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
April 30, 2010	Mother of Sorrow Church event	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
May 10, 2010	Lynwood Unified School District	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
May 11, 2010	Lynwood Unified School District	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
May 13, 2010	Lynwood Unified School District	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
May 14, 2010	Lynwood Unified School District	St. Francis Medical Center Foundation
March 24, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
March 25, 2010	Kedren Headstart	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
March 29, 2010	West Athens Elementary School	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
March 31, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 7, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 12, 2010	West Athens Elementary School	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 14, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 21, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 26, 2010	West Athens Elementary School	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 27, 2010	Kedren Headstart	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 27, 2010	96 <sup>th</sup> Elementary School	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
April 28, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

May 4, 2010	96 <sup>th</sup> Elementary School	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 5, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 10, 2010	West Athens Elementary School	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 12, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 12, 2010	Head Start State Preschool in Inglewood	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 17, 2010	SHIELDS for Families-Crenshaw Substance Abuse Program	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 19, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 21, 2010	SHIELDS for Families-Crenshaw Substance Abuse Program	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 24, 2010	West Athens Elementary School	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
May 26, 2010	Pueblo Del Rio Housing Project	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center